VLR-9/10/03 NRHP-1/16/04

NPS Form 10-900-b
(March 1992)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Multiple Property Documentation Form

X New Submission ___ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing African American Historic Resources of Alexandria, Virginia

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Educational Development in Alexandria, Virginia, 1790-1953
Residential Development in Alexandria, Virginia, 1790-1953
Communal Development in Alexandria, Virginia, 1790-1953

C. Form Prepared by

Elizabeth Calvit, 1994; updated by Francine Bromberg and Barbara B. Ballentine, 2001, Office of Historic Alexandria, City of Alexandria, Virginia, 703-838-4554

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature and title of certifying official

12/2/03
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper

Date

TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR CONTINUATION SHEETS

E. STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

Introduction

The history of Alexandria's African American citizens and how they formed a supportive community to fulfill their needs to educate, house, and provide for themselves and their children under restrictive conditions has been documented. The places where they lived, worked, worshiped, studied, and enjoyed each other's company should be identified and preserved to fully understand Alexandria's early African American history.

This multiple property nomination for African American Historic Resources of Alexandria, Virginia is divided into three contexts— residential development, educational development, and communal development—for the period 1790 through 1953. The history of African Americans has a wide range of potential contexts, but these three have the most complete collection of existing research.

Alexandria's History 1790-1953

In the late eighteenth century, Alexandria was a bustling port, one of the ten busiest in the United States, particularly due to tobacco and the increasing volume of grain exports.[1] Over the next one hundred and sixty years the city witnessed a series of changes, including a difficult recession, a civil war, and World War II. It changed from a port to a center of manufacturing and railroad transportation, and became a suburb of the nation's capital. The early population of this town was composed primarily of whites, free blacks, and enslaved peoples.

As the port's activity increased between 1790 and 1820, so did its population which tripled in 30 years. According to the 1790 federal census, Alexandria's population totaled 2,748 with 2,153 whites, 52 free blacks, and 543 enslaved people. By 1820, the numbers had increased substantially, with 5,615 whites, 1,168 free blacks and 1,435 enslaved people.[2] African Americans comprised a significant portion of the city's population (32%). Tobacco was the dominant export in 1790, but its importance was diminishing, as wheat exports gained in profitability. Exports of flour moved Alexandria to a level of competition with the ports of Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York. However, wars in Europe and high wheat tariffs in England dramatically reduced wheat exports until 1846 when Britain's Corn Laws were repealed.[3]

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1 Blomberg, Belinda. Free Black Adaptive Responses to the Antebellum Urban Environment: Neighborhood Formation and Socioeconomic Stratification in Alexandria, Virginia, 1790-1850 (American University, Washington, DC, 1988), 62.

2 Ibid., Table 3, 217b.

3 G. Terry Sharrer, "Commerce and Industry" in Alexandria: A Towne in Transition, 1800-1900 John D. Macoll, ed. (Alexandria, VA: Alexandria Bicentennial Corporation, 1977), 18-

Throughout this period, Alexandria's African American population expanded. In 1790, most African Americans were living in, or adjacent to, the houses of whites. However, the city's small group of free blacks (52 people) would experience a rapid increase over the next 20 years. The expanding economy and an excess of labor on plantations, provided incentives for owners to allow enslaved people to hire out. Many were able to work odd jobs after completing their regular duties and some were eventually able to purchase their freedom. Urban areas such as Alexandria attracted freedmen because of employment opportunities, more social freedom and anonymity.[4]

Alexandria officially became a part of the newly created District of Columbia in 1801. This new status removed it from the tightening laws of the South pertaining to slavery and free blacks. The city became a relatively secure and comfortable place for free black people to live resulting in a large increase in the free black population. Runaway enslaved people found the city a refuge due to the number of sympathetic residents from non-slave holding states and territories and a transportation system that provided access to other regions of the North. Although part of the new District of Columbia, the city followed many of the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia. In 1805, a law was enacted in Virginia requiring all free blacks to leave the state within one year of obtaining their freedom. However, the law was seldom enforced in Alexandria. With the city's retrocession to Virginia in 1847, the law was modified to allow African Americans to remain in the city if a hearing was held, and it was determined that they possessed "good character" and were a "peaceable, sober, orderly, and industrious person."[5]

In an urban setting such as Alexandria, free blacks and enslaved people often held jobs that required skilled labor. Many were carpenters, brick makers, brick layers, and coopers. In the early part of the nineteenth century, Alexandria did not attract a large numbers of immigrants due to few job opportunities in iron, textile, and chemical manufacturing, jobs commonly undertaken by immigrants.[6]

Alexandria experienced a recession beginning in 1820 that lasted around twenty years. Several factors contributed to the decline, including a loss of trade to the larger ports at Baltimore and

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4 Elsa S. Rosental "1790 Names – 1970 Faces: A Short History of Alexandria's Slave and Free Black Community: in Alexandria: A Composite History Volume I, ed. Elizabeth Hambleton and Marian Van Landingham (Alexandria, VA: Alexandria Bicentennial Commission, 1975), 85.

5 Ibid., 83-84.

6 Blomberg, Belinda. Free Black Adaptive Responses to the Antebellum Urban Environment: Neighborhood Formation and Socioeconomic Stratification in Alexandria, Virginia, 1790-1850 (American University, Washington, DC, 1988), 64.

Richmond, and an embargo on certain products for export to England. Additionally, Georgetown, a competing port on the Potomac that was closer to the new Federal City, drew away some of the city's port business. Free black craftsmen, such as coopers, who depended upon commerce, were affected by this recession.[7] Added to these negative economic factors was a devastating fire in 1827 in Alexandria that destroyed forty houses and several warehouses and stores.

The increase in Alexandria's importance as a slave-trading city, between 1820 and 1840, affected both enslaved people and free blacks. The city's declining wheat and tobacco trades, and the abolition of foreign slave trading made buying and selling enslaved people to the South profitable. The Franklin and Armfield slave trading company did a brisk business at this time. They were reported to have shipped 100 or more slaves to New Orleans every two weeks. Many enslaved people were sold to regions in the South, separating them from their families.

In 1831, Nat Turner, a bondsman and religious leader, led a rebellion against slavery in Southampton County, Virginia. This rebellion added social tension to already difficult economic times. Many whites in Alexandria were afraid that free blacks would lead a similar rebellion in the city and were therefore a threat to their safety. The governor of Virginia proposed after the rebellion to appropriate funds to remove all free blacks from the state, but the proposal was not accepted. In response to this proposal, forty-three freedmen signed a petition and presented it to the mayor of Alexandria declaring that they would become informants in the event of a slave uprising. The document, which was signed by many of the most successful freedmen in the city, promised to " . . . unite heart and hand in defending the authorities of the town and community against whatsoever enemy should rise up against them. And . . . that they would promptly give public information of any plot, design, or conspiracy that might come to their knowledge to Disturb the peace and jeopardize the safety of the community."[8]

A shift occurred during the recession with the economy moving from an export-based one to one that included manufacturing, slave labor trading, and fish processing. Alexandria was never a major manufacturing center, but there was slow growth in the number and type of manufacturing enterprises. There were a few craft shops as well as a sugar refinery, tanneries, and a furniture factory. The Alexandria Canal Company completed a canal in 1845, which connected Alexandria with Georgetown via an aqueduct over the Potomac River and increased the town's opportunities to move more products to the interior and from the interior to the port of Alexandria. With the completion of the canal, manufacturing increased, including a cotton mill that opened in 1847. Other operations that opened after the canal became operational included a gas works, a foundry,

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7 Ibid., 63.

8 Cressey, Pamela J. The Alexandria, Virginia City-Site: Archaeology In An Afro-American Neighborhood, 1830-1910, Ph.D. Dissertation (Iowa City: Department of Anthropology, University of Iowa, August, 1985), 57-60; Blomberg, 66-67.

bakery, plaster mill, and three more tanneries.[9]

Despite the recession and evolution of Alexandria's economy, the port offered opportunities for African Americans, with many involved in the repair and building of ships, and others working in ship maintenance and operation. African Americans served as sailors in a larger percentage of their numbers than was so with whites.[10] The port also provided employment in the fishing industry. Although the wages were not high, jobs could be found cleaning, salting, packing, and shipping fish that arrived in the port. Other low paying jobs in the city included washerwomen, domestic servants, and draymen. Important changes occurred in 1847 when the city retroceded to Virginia. Because of this act, many free blacks who owned property left Alexandria for the District of Columbia. The Commonwealth of Virginia had more stringent laws regarding free blacks and enslaved people. One law, enacted in 1793, required free blacks to register their residency, but few actually complied with the law until the city was retroceded.[11] Other laws restricted their ability to own property, travel, and to learn to read and write.

Between 1847 and 1860, Alexandria experienced a period of growth in commerce and industry with the success of the Alexandria Canal and the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal. Alexandria began a short period of industrialization as coal, flour, grain, or other products moved through the city. The Civil War, however, interrupted the city's economic expansion.

Due to its occupation by Union troops during the war, most of the city's financial and commercial industry declined sharply. A few industries that were dependent on local markets, including breweries, brass and iron works, and cotton factories, remained open.[12] Alexandria became a Union hospital, railroad, and supply center. The Union army operated a slaughterhouse, processing about 100 head of cattle a day to be packed in salt and dispatched to the front.

Another operation was the largest bakery in the world, located at the corner of Princess and Fayette Streets, where 200 employees produced 90,000 loaves of bread a day. Between 1861 and 1865 the Union supply station at Alexandria distributed 81 million pounds of corn, 412 million pounds each of oats and hay, and 530 million pounds of coal.[13] An occupied town throughout the war, the city's financial and commercial base was eroded. Despite the economic difficulties, the

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9 Blomberg, Free Black Adaptive Responses, 63-65.

10 Rosenthal, "1790 Names-1970 Faces," 87.

11 Blomberg, Free Black Adaptive Responses, 67.

12 Cressey, The Alexandria, Virginia City-Site, 63.

13 William Seale, A Guide to Historic Alexandria, City of Alexandria, 2000, 53.

city experienced a population boom as former slaves, known as contraband, and free blacks sought refuge in the city. As many as 2,000 free blacks were buried by the United States government in the Alexandria Freedmen's Cemetery between the years of 1864 and 1869. The plot was established by the United States military authority which governed Alexandria during the Civil War.

After the Civil War, Alexandria returned to a small-town pace. Times were difficult, but the city experienced new growth in its immigrant population. Previously, European immigrants had not been attracted to the local job market because of competition with enslaved people and free blacks for jobs and a lack of a need for the job skills usually common to immigrants. A few German Jewish immigrants had found opportunities in operating dry goods stores, bakeries, and shoe stores in the city prior to the Civil War. The influx of European immigrants after the war was in direct competition with Alexandria's African Americans.[14]

The town tried several unsuccessful business ventures to regain its prosperity. The port and railroads remained in business shipping out the products of the town: bottled and barreled beer, baked goods–tea biscuits sent to England and breads to Baltimore and east–furniture and architectural parts, fertilizers, and agricultural products.[15] Underground sewers were installed, replacing the open wood, brick, or cobblestone sewers, which appalled the Union soldiers during the occupation. The city's economy also shifted between 1870 and 1900 as it moved from a small industrial city on the Potomac to a residential suburb of Washington, D.C. and a transportation center for Northern Virginia.[16]

World War I brought the real economic upswing to Alexandria. Shipbuilding was a major Enterprise on Jones Point where twelve steel ships were built, each costing over $1.5 million. Hundreds of workers were attracted to the shipyard and to the new Torpedo Factory. The growth of industry continued into the 1930s when the Ford Motor Company plant was built on the river just south of Old Town. The build-up for World War II transformed Alexandria by doubling the population and creating an urgent need for housing. There were 6,000 employees at the Torpedo Factory, which reopened in 1937 after closing in 1923. The railroad at Potomac Yard and the shipyard to the south also expanded greatly. Begun in 1943 with funding from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, Parkfairfax and Fairlington residential communities provided pleasant suburban living in a landscaped setting. Their 5,000 units made them the largest housing development in the nation; 85% of the residents were government workers.[17]

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14 Cressey, The Alexandria, Virginia City-Site, 63.

15 Seale, A Guide to Historic Alexandria, 57.

16 Cressey, The Alexandria, Virginia City-Site, 51.

17 Seale, A Guide to Historic Alexandria, 68.

Between 1790 and 1953, the life of the black citizens living in Alexandria changed dramatically. Despite the challenges they faced, they created a community including educational opportunities, African American neighborhoods, and communal organizations. The assistance of the Quakers, who provided both educational and housing opportunities, must be acknowledged.

Residential Development in Alexandria, Virginia, 1790-1953

In 1790, most African Americans in the city were enslaved and living in or adjacent to white households. There were a few free blacks who, with the assistance of white Quakers and Baptists who were willing to rent them land or houses, were able to establish the Bottoms neighborhood in the 1790s. Over time, seven African American neighborhoods were established, beginning in the last years of the eighteenth century and continuing until the 1900s. These have, for the most part, survived until the present. However, in recent years, renovations, gentrification, public housing projects, and new development have displaced some long-time black residents. In all of these early neighborhoods, residents established groceries, churches, saloons, and schools to provide for the other needs of their growing community.[18] In addition to providing a living space, many houses also served as places of business for African American grocers, seamstresses, and washerwomen.

As the city grew between 1790 and the years prior to the Civil War, it offered a limited number of housing options for enslaved people and free blacks. Many enslaved people lived in white-owned houses and outbuildings. There are a few outbuildings and houses in Alexandria that are believed to have been the residences of enslaved people who either lived in, behind, or in close proximity to a main house.[19] A small percentage of enslaved people lived off-premises away from their owners, sometimes renting rooms in the houses of free blacks. The recession during the 1820s and '30s contributed to the partitioning of large parcels of land on the outskirts of the city. Those that could not purchase land were able to rent houses owned by other free blacks or whites. The 1840 census revealed that there were 4,270 free blacks and enslaved people living in all parts of the city.[20] The housing available to free blacks settling in Alexandria was affected by discrimination, low wages, and the need to live close to their jobs. These practices, as well as a desire for cohesiveness and the encouragement of Quaker landowners, reinforced the clustering of African

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18 Cressey, The Alexandria, Virginia City-Site, 74-75; Blomberg, Free Black Adaptive Responses, 75.

19 Rosenthal, "1790 Names-1970 Faces," 88; Deines, Anne. The Slave Population in 1810 Alexandria, Virginia: A Preservation Plan for Historic Resources (Columbian College and Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, George Washington University, Washington, DC, May 8, 1994), 76.

20 Rosenthal, "1790 Names-1970 Faces," 88.

Americans and the creation of small neighborhoods. Four neighborhoods, developed in Alexandria during the years 1790 to 1860, are associated with African Americans: "the Bottoms," "Hayti," "Fishtown," and "Uptown." The first two developed south of King Street, the last two developed to the north of King Street.

Alexandria's first African American neighborhood, settled around 1798, was located in the southwestern quadrant of Alexandria and was known historically as "the Bottoms." Today it is known as "The Dip" (South Washington to South Henry streets and Prince to Franklin streets). This area rests at a lower elevation than surrounding streets, hence its name. The Colored Baptist Society, latter known as the Alfred Street Baptist Church, and the Odd Fellows Joint Stock Company, the oldest known African American association in Alexandria, were located in the Bottoms. The area remains a predominately African American one, although many of the earliest structures and houses have been demolished.

The second area, known as "Hayti" (South Fairfax to South Pitt streets and Prince to Gibbon streets), developed in the early 1800s in the southeastern quadrant of the city around the 400 block of South Royal Street, and was the home of many black leaders. It has been suggested that the title of this neighborhood was named for the island of Haiti and in memory of its 1804 slave revolt.[21] By the mid-twentieth century, several wood and brick townhouses survived on the 400 block of South Royal and the 300 block of South Fairfax Streets. The Wilkes Street Tunnel, built for the Orange and Alexandria Railroad in 1856, is still a Hayti landmark.

"Fishtown" was a very small seasonal area that sprang up every spring by the fish wharves, beginning in 1856. Many of the buildings appeared to have been erected as the fishing season began and dismantled again at the end of the season. African Americans were employed as hands on the dock or as fish cleaners of shad and herring.

The last area to develop prior to the Civil War was "Uptown," in the northwestern section of town extending from North Columbus Street west to North West Street and from Montgomery Street south to Cameron Street. By 1870, with many African Americans migrating to Alexandria during and after the war, Uptown grew into a large neighborhood. Many black churches developed here. The local Parker-Gray Historic District protects the historic structures in Uptown. The total area of Uptown is about 24 blocks, making it the largest of the historic African American neighborhoods in Alexandria.

During and after the Civil War, five more neighborhoods were established – "The Berg," "the Hill," "the Hump," "Cross Canal," and "Colored Rosemont." One area was located near the

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21 Ibid., 80-81; McCord, T.B., Jr., Across The Fence, But A World Apart. (Office of Historic Alexandria, VA, 1985), 14.

waterfront, in the northeast quadrant, and was referred to as "the Berg," perhaps named after Petersburg, Virginia, from where many freedmen escaped. The area extended from North Fairfax Street west to North Saint Asaph Street and from Madison Street south to Princess Street. African Americans escaping slavery established the Berg during the Civil War in Union-occupied Alexandria. Almost all of the houses originally part of the Berg have been demolished and replaced with a public housing facility.

"The Hill" or "Vinegar Hill," as it was sometimes called, was an African American residential area adjoining the Hayti neighborhood (South Union to South Washington streets and Wolfe to Green streets). The Hill's name came from the expression "out on the hill," in reference to the African Americans that moved into the southern city limits during and after the Civil War. Saloons, groceries and black schools were part of the Hill neighborhood. The 400 block of Gibbon Street today is reminiscent of how the black neighborhood appeared in the early 19th century. The area was greatly changed in the 1940s and 1950s with the building of Yates Gardens, a Colonial-Revival style rowhouse development covering several blocks.

At the end of the nineteenth century, "the Hump" developed in the far northwestern edge of Alexandria. A small area, it extended from North Washington Street west to North Patrick Street and from First Street (with a one block jog to Second Street) south to Madison Street. It was a mixed community of blacks and working class white citizens. In an oral history interview, Henry Johnson remembers getting water from large wooden pumps located on the street corners. In 1943, the government condemned two acres of the Hump for apartment buildings restricted to African American tenants. The James Bland Housing Project consisted of two-story contemporary buildings in a pleasant setting of trees and lawn.[22]

The "Cross Canal" neighborhood was a quiet and rural area established in the Civil War era. The neighborhood's name was derived from its location at the northeast section of the city, just across the Alexandria Canal. The area covered just a few streets from the Potomac shore west to Pitt Street and from First Street south to Madison Street. Residents of this area were commonly employed on the wharves or at the Dominion Glass Factory, established in the early twentieth century on North Fairfax Street. None of the historic buildings here remain.

"Colored Rosemont" was a small African American neighborhood established in the late 1800s and early 1900s. In 1950, the Parker-Gray High School, a school for black students under state segregation, was built in this neighborhood. Other small neighborhoods developed on the outer edges of the city in the last years of the nineteenth century and early 1900s. "Sunnyside" and "Mudtown," also known as "Macedonia," were considered rural communities and defined the western edge of the city.[23]

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22 William Seale, A Guide to Historic Alexandria, City of Alexandria, VA, 2000, 68.

23 Blomberg, Free Black Adaptive Responses, 75.

Alexandria Archaeology, an agency of the City of Alexandria, has studied African American archaeological sites since 1978. Studies have been concluded on twenty-five free black residential sites, two slave sites, and three manufacturing sites where free blacks and enslaved people worked. There has also been a study of the Alfred Street Baptist Church that has furnished additional information on the history of the church and the neighborhood. The studies have used a variety of resources including historic documents relating to the sites, their inhabitants, and the development of African American neighborhoods in Alexandria. The results of these studies have contributed to the understanding and knowledge of how some African Americans lived during this period. The artifacts found at these sites offer a glimpse into the lives of enslaved people and free blacks. Objects such as table wares, kitchen wares, remnants of foodstuffs, chamber pots, bottles, and buttons provide information about diet, lifeways, consumer patterns, and backyard features of African American urban life in Alexandria.

Educational Developments in Alexandria, Virginia, 1790-1953

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Alexandria held few public opportunities for education. A few African Americans attended schools held in private homes or churches as early as 1809. However, religious institutions were the biggest providers of education in the city until 1870, when a public school system was formed.[24] Blacks, as well as whites, held small classes day and night for African American children and adults. These "pay" or "free" schools were situated in all areas of the city. The earliest, on the corner of Fairfax and Duke streets, was managed by a white woman, Mrs. Cameron. Another school was operated by Mrs. Tutten in her house on the corner of Pitt and Prince streets. Both these schools were in operation before the War of 1812. After the war, a free school was founded by an association of free African Americans with the "cordial aid and encouragement from the enlightened and benevolent white people of the city.... The association was composed of the most substantial colored people of the city, and was maintained with great determination and success for a considerable period." The school was held on the 3rd floor of the Alexandria Academy building now vacant after the removal of the Washington Free School to the new Lancastrian school building.[25] The Reverend James H. Hanson, a white minister from the Methodist Episcopal Church, with an African American

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24 Henry G. Morgan, Jr. "Education" in Alexandria: A Towne in Transition, 1800-1900 John D. Macoll, ed. (Alexandria, VA: Alexandria Bicentennial Corporation, 1977), 104.

25 Department of Education Special Report of the Commissioner of Education on the "Condition and Improvement of Public Schools in the District of Columbia" submitted to the Senate June 1868 and to the House, with additions. (Government Printing Office, June 13, 1870), 283-284.

congregation, conducted classes there with almost 300 students.[26] The Academy building was sold in 1823. It is not known if the school continued after that. An 1830 law of the Virginia General Assembly forbade the teaching of free blacks and enslaved people. Constables were ordered to disband every school that was caught teaching African Americans, whether it was a day or night school, or operating in a church or private home. This law led the schools of African Americans to become very secretive; children and adults alike hid the fact that they could read or write. Another law instituted in 1839 prevented those who were educated outside Virginia from reentering the state. Despite the restrictions placed on the black community, many were able to receive some level of schooling, and others were able to obtain the necessary skills to become professionals, such as engineers and lawyers.[27] Others were able to learn a trade and become skilled craftsmen and tradesmen, sailors, manufacturers, butchers, ships' caulkers, shipwrights, and carpenters.

One of Rev. Hanson's students, Alfred Parry who was born a slave, later became a teacher himself. By the early 1830s, Parry had opened a night school but it fell victim in 1837 to a city ordinance that prevented the assemblage of blacks at anytime, whether for religious purposes or amusement. Parry was able to operate in spite of the law by hiring a white man to be present at all classes. He went on to open a day school known as the Mount Hope Academy, located between Duke and Wolfe streets, that was attended by both enslaved people and freedmen. Many enslaved children attended the school with written permission from their owners who also paid the tuition. These schools operated until 1843 when Mr. Parry moved to Washington.[28]

An African American woman, Sylvia Morris, operated a school for about twenty years on Washington Street not far from the Alexandria Academy. Her school was operating at the time of the Turner Rebellion and remained open until the city was retroceded to Virginia. Another school was located in the alley between Duke and Prince streets and was run by a baker and a free black man, Joseph Ferrell, recognized as a leader in the African American community.[29]

When Alexandria was part of the District of Columbia (1801-1847), restrictions on African Americans were not as strict as elsewhere in the state. However, with the ratification of retrocession in 1847 all instruction of African Americans was prohibited. If students were sent out of state to be educated they were not allowed to return. It was not until the occupation of the city by federal troops in 1861 that African Americans could safely congregate for social, religious or educational purposes.

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26 Ibid., 283

27 Rosenthal, "1790 Names-1970 Faces," 86-87

28 Department of Education, "Special Report," 283

29 Ibid., 283-284

Churches in Alexandria were an important place for African American children and adults to learn to read and write. Two churches that opened prior to the Civil War were important learning centers. The Colored Baptist Society (currently Alfred Street Baptist Church), which in 1803 became the first church organized in Alexandria by African Americans, created a formal school in 1833.[30] Prior to this, education had been a part of Sunday school, also known as a Sabbath school, but many young students were not able to attend because they were required to work to help support their families. The Alfred Street Baptist Church school was started by Mr. Nuthall, a teacher from the city of Washington, but it lasted only three years due to the fears of whites, as a result of the Turner Rebellion. The Sunday school, however, continued to operate, even after the retrocession of the city and the enforcement of Virginia laws preventing the education of blacks.[31] The second church established for African Americans in the city, Davis Chapel (currently Roberts Memorial United Methodist Church), was founded in 1834. This church also established a Sabbath school, but unlike Alfred Street Baptist Church, it was forced to close the school when Alexandria again became part of Virginia.[32] In 1862, during the Civil War, Davis Chapel, renamed Roberts chapel, reopened its Sabbath school.

With the Civil War, enslaved people fled the South seeking freedom. Federal occupation of Alexandria in 1861 improved the lives of many African Americans. They were openly allowed to educate their children and local African American churches, citizens, and benevolent groups from the North provided the primary instruction for these students. "Contraband" schools were organized for enslaved people fleeing the South. Federal troops organized one contraband school, and other such schools were organized in private homes and churches. The first to be organized was a pay school established by Mary Chase, a slave freed when Alexandria was occupied. The school was called the Columbia Street School and opened in 1861 near Wolfe Street.[33] It operated until 1866 when it was absorbed by one of the free schools of the benevolent societies. Another school, called the St. Rose Institute, located on West Street between King and Prince streets, was also opened in 1861. It was a day and night school established by Jane Crouch and Sarah Gray, both of whom were active in the education of African Americans in Alexandria for many years.[34]

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30 Alfred Street Baptist Church, "From Our History," 188th Anniversary, (November 10, 1991), 1; Correspondence to Jean Federico, director Historic Alexandria from Eugene Thompson, director, Alexandria Black History Resource Center, January 29, 1992.

31 Blomberg, Free Black Adaptive Responses, 77-78.

32 James Howard, "History of Roberts Memorial" Anniversary Visit and Mortgage Burnin[illegible], Roberts Memorial Chapel Methodist Church (November 1943), 13

33 The Department of Education Special Report misidentified the street name. Although the report refers to the school as Columbia Street School, it probably meant the Columbus Street School.

34 Department of Education. "Special Report," 285.

During the war, several more churches were organized for the growing African American population and provided educational opportunities, religious teaching and needed social services. A school for contraband was founded in 1862 by Rev. Clem Robinson, a black minister originally from Virginia and educated in Pennsylvania. Beulah Baptist Church was established the next ye[illegible] by Robinson and the school operated in the church facilities. Another school was established by Leland Warring, a former slave, and although he was not highly educated himself, he sought to share his knowledge of reading and writing with others. Established in 1862, it operated in one of the former white schools for only one year until it was absorbed by the federal superintendent's school for contrabands and moved to another location.[35] These four schools were organized and operated by African Americans for other African Americans.

Other schools were opened for contrabands by whites and blacks. Many would last for a year or two and then close, or they were absorbed by another school. Some schools were established by people representing different religious groups outside of Virginia. These men and women were opposed to slavery and traveled to Alexandria to do what they could to help enslaved people and free blacks. Organizations sending teachers to Alexandria included the New England Freedmen's Society and the American Baptist Free Mission Society of New York.[36] The Jacobs Free School, supported by the New England Freedmen's Aid Society, was located on the corner of Pitt and Oronoco streets. The Freedmen's Chapel, organized by Rev. W.M. Scott, was also located on the corner of Pitt and Oronoco streets.[37]

The First Free Colored Mission Day School, located on the corner of Prince and Royal Streets, incorporated the already mentioned Leland Warring school. Rev. Albert Gladwin, a minister fr[illegible]n Connecticut, was appointed "Superintendent of Contrabands" by the military and opened the School in 1863. It operated for three years and had both black and white teachers, many of whom were convalescing soldiers. Other schools were the Union Town School, opened in 1863 on the corner of Union and Wolfe streets, and the Primary School, also began in 1863 and led by William Harris and Richard Lyles, both African Americans. The school was located on Princess street between Pitt and St. Asaph streets. Rev. N.K. Crow, who was originally from Illinois, opened the Sickles Barracks School in 1863. This school operated in a church that had been abandoned at the beginning of the war. Located on the corner of Princess and Patrick streets, the building was purchased by a group of African Americans. Between 1864 and 1865 there were five "national" schools organized in Alexandria, mostly by groups from other states. The instructors for these schools were both black and white. The First National Freedmen's School, first located north of Cameron Street between Payne and West streets, was opened under the direction of the New York Freedmen's Relief. One year later the school moved to the corner of

35 Ibid., 286-287.

36 Ibid., 287-288.

37 Ibid., 289-290.

Queen and Payne streets. The Second National Freemen's School, organized in 1864, was located on Wolfe between Pitt and Royal streets, and was operated by two black teachers. By 1867, the school was supported by the North Shore and Portland, Maine Aid Societies.[38] A Third National School opened on South Alfred Street near Wilkes Street, and the Fourth National School opened in 1865 and was located on West Street between Prince and Duke streets. The Fifth National School was near the corner of Union and Franklin streets and was moved in 1866 to Water Street. All three of these schools were also operated by the New York Relief Association.

After the Civil War, Alexandria organized its first publicly funded schools for both blacks and whites. Many teachers who actively taught in the years before 1870 became part of the Alexandria school system and continued to teach the city's black students. The number of students in Alexandria decreased dramatically after the war as many African Americans moved out of the city to find better job opportunities further north. In 1864 there was an average attendance of 1,036 students, and by 1866 the number had grown to 1,594. However, in 1867 the number had decreased slightly to 835, but it fell again in 1869 to 608.

Two schools for black children were built after the Civil War by George Seaton, a well-known local African American master carpenter. Under Seaton's leadership, a group of African Americans established the Free School Society of Alexandria. Working with the Freedmen's Bureau, the society obtained land for the schools and the materials to build them, and Seaton received a commission to construct them. The Seaton School for boys (later known as the Snowden School) was completed in April 1867, and the Hallowell School for girls opened in the following November.[39] The Snowden School, located on South Pitt between Gibbon and Franklin streets, was constructed with funds from the Freedmen's Bureau and directed by a group of trustees, all African American. The Hallowell School, located on Alfred Street, between Princess and Oronoco Streets, was also directed by trustees. In 1870, these two schools became part of the city's public school system. Neither is currently standing.

The schools created by the Freedmen's Bureau continued into the twentieth century. There were approximately 600 students in the two schools until 1910 when a great decrease in enrollment occurred. No reason was given for the decrease in the schools'enrollment, and there was plenty of room in the school so overcrowding was not the reason. A reference in the registry of the Snowden School to the vaccination of pupils might indicate some sort of epidemic that could have

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38 Ibid., 289.

39 Peter Bernstein, The Life and Times of George Lewis Seaton, ms. On file, Alexandria Archaeology Museum, 11.

kept students out of school.[40] The enrollment remained low until 1920 when a new school was built for both boys and girls. Named Parker-Gray Elementary for the respective principals of the earlier schools, John Parker and Sarah Gray, the school provided education for African American children from first to eighth grades. The school had a capacity of 480, but 675 pupils enrolled when it opened. Other changes included a new superintendent of schools with an interest in education of black children and the first black principal with a college degree. By 1935 the bare beginnings of a high school were started on the second floor of the Parker-Gray School. In the next fifteen years the high school added a library and a librarian, received accreditation, and the teachers gradually progressed to an equalization of salaries. There was a lot of enthusiasm to develop a complete system of education through grade eleven. According to a research paper submitted to the Department of Education in 1969, grade twelve was not added until 1952. By the mid-1940s, graduates began to go to college.

Other schools for African Americans included the Rosenwald School, also known as the Seminary School, which was located on King Street Extended near Braddock Road, and consisted of only three rooms. It came into the school system when that area was annexed to the city. In 1941, four rooms were added as well as a library. Lyles-Crouch School, an old silk factory that was purchased in 1933, eased the overcrowding at Parker-Gray. St Joseph's Parochial School on North Columbus Street was in existence at least by 1932 and continued until the late 1940s.

The large and swift increase in population during and after World War II led to discussions of the need for a separate high school building.[41] Crowding at Parker-Gray was so extreme that a building one block away was turned into additional classrooms and a cafeteria. This building later became the Pendleton Street Recreation Center. Families who could afford it sent their high school students to Washington, D.C., or Manassas, Virginia, to escape the crowded school. The new Parker-Gray High School, a school for black students under state segregation, was built in Colored Rosemont in 1950. The building housed 450 pupils. The 1920 building was renamed Charles Houston and housed grades 1 - 7. The Seminary School was phased out and students were bused to Lyles-Crouch or Charles Houston.

Development of Communal Organizations in Alexandria, Virginia, 1790-1953

African Americans strengthened their communities by establishing local churches and benevolent societies. The first African American churches in Alexandria began as part of existing white institutions. These new churches became an important part of the African American community,

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40 Laurel C. Dolan, "A History of Negro Education in the Alexandria City Public Schools, 1900-1964." (A Research Paper Submitted to the Department of Education, The American University, In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of Masters of Education, August 1969), 19

41 Ibid., 20

providing religious support, educational opportunities, a place for social gatherings, and a central location for many charitable activities. They also were some of the few institutions in which African Americans held positions of authority and became the training grounds for future black leaders.[42]

A few churches were established in Alexandria between 1790 and 1860. With the advent of the Civil War and the influx of large numbers of former enslaved people, many more services were needed, and between 1860 and 1870 several more churches were organized. Although the population of blacks declined slightly after the Civil War, more churches were established to provide needed social and religious outlets for the city's African American residents.

The first African American church was founded in the Bottoms neighborhood in 1803. Services were held in private homes.[43] A small group of free blacks who were members of the Colored Baptist Society leased some land on South Alfred Street in 1818 and built a small wooden church soon after. The congregation of the new church was composed of both free blacks and enslaved people. The white First Baptist Church supplied white ministers until 1863 when they supplied their first African American minister.[44]

In 1855, the wooden structure was demolished and a new brick church was erected.[45] Now known as the Alfred Street Baptist Church, it was an integral part of early black history in the city, providing educational opportunities for both children and adults through church Sunday schools. Alfred Street Baptist Church established a formal school in 1833, but it lasted only three years because of racial tensions in the city. However, the Sunday school at Alfred Street Baptist Church continued to operate. During the Civil War, the church building served as a hospital for sick and injured soldiers.[46] After the war, Alfred Street Baptist Church continued to be a major provider of social support and a prominent religious center for African Americans in Alexandria and it remains so today.

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42 D.R. Goldfield, Cotton Fields and Skyscrapers (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982): 50, quoted in Blomberg, Free Black Adaptive Responses, 76.

43 Research by Alfred Street Baptist Church reveals that the congregation may have been formed prior to 1803. Conversation with Rev. John Peterson, July 12, 1994.

44 "History, 1803-1979," Alfred Street Baptist Church, 2.

45 C. Richard Bierce, "Outline Chronology and Observations - Alfred Street Baptist Church" (draft document in the files of the Alexandria Black History Resource Center, 1980), 1.

46 Marie T. Boyd, "A Brief History of Alfred Street Baptist Church," One Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary of Alfred Street Baptist Church (Alexandria, Virginia, 1956), 5.

The second black church was formed as an offshoot of the city's white Trinity Methodist Church. As the number of African American members of Trinity increased—both freed and enslaved—they desired their own separate meeting place and purchased a site for the new congregation in 1834. The new church was named Davis Chapel, after Rev. Charles A. Davis, the white minister that supported the formation of the church. Like Alfred Street Baptist Church, it provided needed services to the neighborhoods of "the Bottoms" and "Hayti" that immediately surrounded it. Davis Chapel held Sunday school classes, but unlike the Alfred Street Baptist Church, these were forced to close in 1847. A split in the church occurred in 1845 over the issue of slavery causing Rev. Davis to leave. Due to the split and Davis's departure, the congregation chose to rename the church Roberts Chapel in honor of a deceased Methodist bishop.[47]

After Alexandria retroceded to Virginia in 1847, the city's African American population was forced to comply with local laws that prevented a group of people meeting unless a white man was present. There was also a curfew in place that forbade the movement of African Americans in public spaces after 10:00 p.m. Religious, educational, and social activities were publicly reduced but they continued, albeit under much more secretive conditions.

With the increase in the number of African Americans moving to Alexandria during the Civil War, several new churches were formed, among them Beulah Baptist Church. This church has the distinction of having one of the first schools for "contrabands" in the country. Unlike the other predominately black churches that formed a religious institution first and a school afterwards, Beulah Baptist Church was formed in 1863, one year after Rev. Clem Robinson organized the school. Known locally as the Select Colored School and officially as Beulah Academy for Colored Youths, it was operated by both Robinson and Rev. G. W. Parker.[48] Robinson was a black minister who was originally from Virginia and was educated in Pennsylvania. He and two other men purchased a parcel of land in the city where a modest church was constructed. The church congregation was small but the school was very successful. In addition to the church's contraband school, it also had a Sabbath school and an evening school.[49]

Other churches founded before, during, and after the war supported newly freed African Americans as they formed new communities and associations, and searched for employment. Between 1864 and 1900 ten new churches were organized including: Zion Baptist, 1864; Shiloh Baptist, around 1863; Third Baptist Church, 1865; Meade Memorial, 1869; Ebenezer Baptist, 1881; Good Shepard Episcopal Chapel, 1883; Mt. Jezreel, 1890; and Oakland Baptist, 1891.[50]

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47 James Howard, "History of Roberts Memorial" Anniversary Celebration Bishop's Visit and Mortgage Burning (Roberts Memorial Chapel Methodist Church, November 1943), 8-11.

48 Beulah Baptist Church One Hundred Thirtieth Anniversary (October 22, 1993), 4.

49 Department of Education, "Special Report," 290-291.

50 Ibid., 291; Notes from files at the Alexandria Black History Resource Center.

Other churches were organized, but they were not able to sustain themselves. In 1900 the City Directory lists nine African American churches, eight of which were Baptist and one was Episcopal. By the end of our period of historic context, the City Directory lists 18 African American churches in seven different denominations, half of which were Baptist.

In addition to religious institutions, social organizations also provided support for African Americans. Fraternal and benevolent societies have existed in black communities since the mid-seventeenth century, providing services to alleviate the harshness of segregated life. In addition to providing support to those in need, these groups provided the stimulus that helped develop leadership within the black community.[51] They provided opportunities for many to learn the principles of economics and needed leadership skills necessary to succeed in a newly freed environment. They also helped create a separate social structure in a segregated society. One of the main goals of many of these groups was to integrate African Americans into the established social, political, and economic systems of Alexandria and the nation.[52] The groups became very popular with thousands participating in national conventions[53] but the lodges remained segregated until after 1951.

In 1869, James Webster, Robert Darnell, and John H. Credit organized the Odd Fellows Joint Stock Company in Alexandria. The Odd Fellows was an established benevolent society founded in the late eighteenth century in England and brought to the United States.[54] Due to racial prejudices, blacks were not allowed to join the all-white societies and as a result, they formed their own organizations. There were other groups of secret societies and local organizations for both men and women that had similar missions including: the Rising Star Chapter #3; Jeremiah Chapter #; Eureka Chapter #2; Oriental Lodge No. 11; Ocarsia Lodge #32; Universal Lodge #91; the Good Samaritans, Mt. Calvary Lodge #1; the Daughters of Zion; and several Galilean orders including the Eastern Star and the Golden Star.[55]

The Odd Fellows Board acquired property from an African Methodist Episcopal church that was unsuccessful in maintaining a congregation. In 1870 a renovated and enlarged building was

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51 Low, W. Augustus and Virgil A. Clift, Encyclopedia of Black America (New York: De Capo, Inc., Plenum Publishing Corp., 1981), 394.

52 Ibid., 395.

53 Encyclopedia of Black History, ed. W. Augustus Low & Virgil A. Clift, McGraw Hill, 198[1] 394

54 T. Michael Miller, "The Odd Fellows Hall -- Pantheon of Black History" (Alexandria, VA 1984), 1-3.

55 Ibid., 1

completed with funding by the Freedmen's Bureau.[56] The hall served as a gathering place for the Odd Fellows, and was also utilized by the other groups mentioned above. In addition, it served as an important place for other festivities, meetings, and receptions. The building was an important part of the social and economic development of the African American community in Alexandria after the Civil War. Many of the leaders in the black community were founders of the Odd Fellows Hall, or were members of one of the many organizations that met there. Other organizations, including the Independent Benevolent Protective Order of Elks of the World, Alexandria Lodge #48, met at 227 North Henry until the end of the period of significance. There were four Masonic lodges that met at the Odd Fellows Hall: Acacia Lodge, Ligon Lodge, Parker Lodge #1341, and Universal Lodge #1. The Universal Lodge, founded in Alexandria in 1845, was believed to have been the first African American Masonic lodge below the Mason-Dixon line.[57] These groups met throughout the first half of the twentieth century.

The large population of African Americans in Alexandria began early to push for a voice. In the 1880s, a delegation of black Alexandrians called on President Grover Cleveland at the White House, asking that an African American be appointed postmaster at Alexandria. In 1939, well before the issue of civil rights was in the national spotlight, pressures to integrate public facilities had taken expression in a sit-in at the Alexandria Public Library on Queen Street. The event was one of the first civil rights sit-ins in American history and a harbinger of peaceful protest throughout the nation. As a result of the sit-in, the City built the small Robinson Library for African Americans in 1940. With desegregation in the 1960s, the building was converted to use for community service programs.

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56 Ibid., 1.

57 Alexandria Black History Resource Center, "Odd Fellows Exhibit" (Fall 1993).

F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Name of Property Type Residential Buildings

Description
Residential buildings associated with African Americans are an important element in the evolution and growth of Alexandria. Residential buildings were either one, two, or three stories and were constructed of wood and/or brick. The buildings used or built by African Americans resemble other houses built between 1790-1953. Although, at one time, there may have been houses built that reflected African-inspired building techniques or traditions, none are known to remain.[58] The houses that were home to many African Americans and remain as reminders of two hundred years of Alexandria's history, reflect local building traditions, attitudes, and available materials. Some African Americans constructed houses or purchased or leased existing structures in the developing neighborhoods. These houses were usually on land owned by whites and rented to the homeowner. Some houses and outbuildings associated with enslaved people illuminate the conditions and places these persons lived during a repressive period of Alexandria's history. The houses inhabited by African Americans, and the neighborhoods where they lived after the Civil War, provide important information on later settlement patterns that occurred as Alexandria grew.

Some dwellings remaining in the city that are associated with important figures in Alexandria's African American history represent the progression of success, as the owners increased their wealth and moved from one house to another, or purchased or built multiple houses. The Seaton house on South Royal Street is one such example. Others represent rental properties owned by successful African American men and women. Moses Hepburn's properties on North Pitt Street illustrate this concept. Still others are modest houses rented by free blacks who were able to save and purchase the freedom of their family members and friends.

Significance
The significance of housing associated with African Americans in Alexandria is revealed in the city's living and building patterns. Originally, Alexandria was a small port with a mixed residential community of blacks and whites. As the town grew and blacks obtained their freedom, they developed smaller and separate neighborhoods on the outskirts of the boundaries of the town. Today these neighborhoods are in the center of historic Alexandria and are important vestiges of African American historic resources in Alexandria. In addition to serving as residences, houses functioned as places of work for many men and women who washed or mended clothes or operated small groceries or bakeries.

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58 Christopher Martin, "Urban Vernacular Housing in Alexandria's Nineteenth-Century Black Neighborhoods" Manuscript, Alexandria Archaeology, Alexandria, VA, 1983), 9.

Houses remaining in Alexandria that are associated with persons significant in Alexandria's African American history include:

- the house of Dr. Albert Johnson, the first professionally educated and trained African American doctor in Alexandria;
- the properties of Moses Hepburn, the son of a white man and an enslaved woman who became a successful businessman and leader in the community; and
- the Seaton house, family residence of George Seaton, a master carpenter who built many buildings and houses in the city and who was also a successful businessman.

Historic resources in Alexandria reveal some facts about how these people lived, the size of their families, their evolving economic status, and the types of businesses they may have operated. The buildings that remain provide the tangible evidence of these people's lives and the growth of neighborhoods between 1790 and 1953.

Registration Requirements
In order to qualify as a residential building, a structure should be associated with African Americans who either owned, or rented, and lived in, and/or operated a place of business there.

Setting and Location
Buildings and structures of this property type should be located within the corporate limits of Alexandria, and may fall inside or outside the established Alexandria National Historic Landmark District and the locally designated Parker-Gray Historic District. The location of a residential building may fall within a residential or commercial area. Its relationship with the historic African American neighborhoods may strengthen its significance.

Design, Materials, and Workmanship
Historically significant properties may include all types of designs, workmanship and materials. They may also include alterations and additions that could reflect important changes over time. The participation of African American carpenters, craftsmen, brickmakers and brick masons, and other tradesmen and professionals in the construction of these buildings and structures contributes to their significance.

Feeling and Association
The residential building must be associated with the history and evolution of African Americans living in Alexandria. It should also provide information that reveals new data and/or contributes to the history of African Americans who lived in Alexandria. The building may have been built, owned, or rented by a family or families of African Americans, or it could have served as a rooming house for several people not related by blood.

Name of Property Type Educational Structures

Description
Educational structures included in this survey are those buildings that served as schools, Sabbath schools, and trade and professional schools for African Americans between 1790 and 1953. They are important reminders of the way in which African Americans overcame restrictions and difficulties in order to obtain an education. These structures may have been churches, private houses, or buildings specifically constructed or used for educational purposes, and were built mainly of wood and/or brick.

A house in Alexandria was typically a two- or three-story building, either of wood frame or brick construction. A school probably used one or two rooms in a house to educate a small number of students. The known history of the schools held in private houses reveals that they were located on the inner fringes of what would become the African American neighborhoods of the city. According to an 1871 report, two such houses had existed in the early decades of the nineteenth century; one was located on the corner of Prince and Pitt streets, and the other on the corner of Fairfax and Duke streets.[59] Although the report generally describes where these schools were located, their exact location and whether or not the structures are still standing, is not known. These houses were located on the edge of "Hayti," a neighborhood that evolved sometime before 1810.

Although these houses are the first mentioned in an 1871 history of education in the city, it can be assumed that other small schools in Alexandria existed. Since restrictive laws after 1830 prevented schools from operating openly for the purpose of educating African Americans, it is probable that private houses served as educational facilities because of the smaller scale of the classes and the ability to hide the learning activities.

Churches were also a major force in the education of African Americans, holding both secular and Sabbath school classes. The Alfred Street Baptist Church, Roberts Memorial United Methodist Church, Beulah Baptist Church, and others offered reading and writing classes for adults and children. The churches where these classes were held have evolved over time. Some that were originally small wood-frame structures were expanded, enlarged, and replaced as congregations and church funds grew. Even though the original structure may be hard to discern through the many layers of change, the significance of the structure is not diminished. It must be

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59 Department of Education. "Special Report of the Commissioner of Education on the Condition and Improvement of Public Schools in the District of Columbia" Submitted to the Senate June 1868, and to the House, with Additions, June 13, 1870 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1871), 283.

recognized that as the African American population of Alexandria grew, including both free blacks and enslaved people, the size and kinds of buildings they constructed reflected an increase in wealth, as well as changing architectural preferences. After the Civil War, the status of all African Americans was transformed, producing still another period of expansion and change that can be seen in the historic African American churches in Alexandria. These structures served as places of learning during the period of significance (1790 to 1953), and the tradition continues to the present.

In 1867, there were two structures constructed specifically as schools for African Americans by a local African American carpenter, George Seaton. These were two-story frame buildings--one located on South Pitt Street between Gibbon and Franklin streets, and the other on North Alfred Street, between Princess and Oronoco streets. The first became the Snowden School for Boys; the second the Hallowell School for girls. These schools became part of the public school system that was organized in 1870. Unfortunately, these structures are no longer standing.

The Alexandria Academy also served African Americans. Built in 1785 as a private school, the building housed separate schools for young white boys on the first two floors. The school on the third floor, the Washington Free School, was endowed by George Washington to provide an education for poor boys and girls. Around 1812 it appears that the free school moved from the Academy to the new Lancastrian school building next door. The third floor of the older building then became a school for African Americans taught by Rev. James Hanson, a white minister from the Methodist Episcopal Church.[60] The Alexandria Academy building was sold as a private residence in 1823 and the school closed or moved. The building was deeded to the Alexandria School Board in 1884. The Alexandria Academy building is architecturally and historically significant as one of the few surviving examples of an 18th century school building. It is listed separately on the National Register of Historic Places.

During the Civil War, the Lancastrian school, no longer serving as a school for white boys, provided shelter for African Americans fleeing the South.[61] In November of 1862 Leland Warring, himself a contraband, started a school in the building. The following February the school came under the charge of the superintendent of contrabands and was moved to the Freedmen's Home in the barrack buildings. The Lancastrian school building was razed in the 1880s to make way for the new Washington School. The corner stone from the original Lancastrian school building was inserted over the east entrance to the building.

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60 Department of Education, Special Report, 283.

61 Henry G. Morgan, Jr., "Education," in Alexandria: A Towne in Transition, 1800-1900, John D. Macoll, ed. (Alexandria, VA: Alexandria Bicentennial Corporation, 1977), 103.

Many people associated with the founding and construction of schools in Alexandria are important figures in the city's African American history. Many were teachers who worked in the schools. Others were responsible for founding the churches and constructing buildings that were then available to teachers and students alike. Included in this important group are George Seaton, Moses Hepburn, John Credit, Jane Crouch, and Sarah Gray. The association between these people and the education of African Americans should be further developed and sites associated with them should be documented and preserved.

Significance

Educational structures are a significant part of the history of African Americans in Alexandria because they illustrate the determination of African Americans to obtain an education. Many early schools were first held in the houses of private citizens, both white and black. Churches also emerged as important educational facilities, because many were able to operate even during times of repression and war. Those educational structures still remaining in Alexandria are important physical reminders of the evolution of education in Alexandria, from periods of opportunities, to years of repression and denial, to freedom of education for all African Americans.

Education was an important goal for many African Americans, both free and enslaved, because they saw it as a path to a better life. Education could mean a better job, or even freedom. Between 1790 and 1951, there were many buildings and structures in Alexandria used to educate African Americans. The recognition of the remaining buildings and structures is important because they reflect an important part of the city's history. They are reminders of the past, when the right to learn was not guaranteed to all. They are also reminders of the determination of African Americans to learn despite the repressive attitudes and laws that sought to prevent them from seeking more than a rudimentary education. Finally, they are reminders of the period after the Civil War when an education was promised to all, but the methods in which it was administered were not equal.

Registration Requirements

In order to qualify as an educational structure, a building should be associated with the education of African Americans. It may be a private house where classes were taught by instructors of any race or creed. It may also be a building specially constructed or used for the education of African Americans, or it may be a church, or a structure affiliated with a religious organization in which some educational opportunities were provided African Americans.

Setting and Location

Buildings and structures of this property type should be located within the corporate limits of Alexandria, and may fall inside or outside the established Alexandria National Historic Landmark District and the locally designated Parker-Gray Historic District. The location of a building may fall within a residential or commercial area. Its relationship with the historic African American neighborhoods may strengthen its significance if it can be established that the

school evolved in response to the needs of the near-by community.

Design, materials, and workmanship
Historically significant properties may include all types of designs, workmanship, and materials They may also include alterations and additions that could reflect important changes over time. The participation of African American carpenters, craftsmen, brick-makers and layers, and other tradesmen and professionals in the construction of these buildings or structures will contribute to a building or structure's significance.

Feeling and Association
A building must be associated with the history and evolution of African American education in Alexandria. The building may not have been used exclusively by or for African Americans, but should provide information that reveals new data and/or contributes to the history of African American education in Alexandria.

Name of Property Type: Structures Owned or Used By Communal Organizations

Description
Communal structures in Alexandria are those buildings that provided the basis for social, political, and religious support within the African American community. They were generally large buildings, either churches or social halls, that provided ample meeting space for groups, both large and small. These buildings were important private meeting places for African Americans living in a segregated environment. Communal buildings in Alexandria were generally two or three stories high. Many communal buildings were larger and more substantial than most houses in Alexandria and were usually constructed of brick in order to reduce the risk of fire.

Most communal structures were constructed according to the needs of the members. The residents of an area first occupied their houses, and as the population grew, structures such as churches and social halls were built to provide the space for groups to meet. Although structures already existing in Alexandria could serve both black and white residents, African Americans were required to use separate spaces in these buildings. African Americans built communal structures in their own neighborhoods to serve their social and religious needs.

Buildings nominated within this Property Type are:

- Alfred Street Baptist Church
- Beulah Baptist Church
- The Odd Fellows Hall and
- Roberts Memorial United Methodist Church

Churches are included in this associated building type because they were the first structures in the city that provided a private place for large and small groups of African Americans to meet. Mo

surviving structures from this period are constructed of brick and are large two- and three-story structures. Alfred Street Baptist Church, Roberts Memorial United Methodist Church, and Beulah Baptist Church are some of the earliest examples of communal structures in the city.

Meeting halls, not associated with a particular religious group, were also built. The Odd Fellows Hall, completed in 1870, was used by many benevolent groups, most of which were composed almost exclusively of African American men and women. In addition to providing space for the gathering of various groups, the Odd Fellows Hall is associated with important figures in Alexandria's African American history. George Seaton is believed to have built the structure, while others such as James Webster, Robert Darnell, and John H. Credit were trustees for the hall.[62] Many people important to the growth and strength of the African American community met at the Odd Fellows Hall. The hall was located in "the Bottoms," one of the oldest African American neighborhoods in Alexandria.

Significance

The communal buildings in Alexandria are important physical reminders of the history and evolution of African Americans and their determination to create a supportive community during the years of slavery, civil war, reconstruction, and the early twentieth century. Communal buildings were the places that African Americans could go to be with their friends and business associates, places that were safe from prejudice and oppression. They were usually churches and halls that provided space for large and small groups to meet, exchange information, celebrate an event, or develop business contacts. The architecture of the building may or may not be significant in its own right. Instead, the building's significance usually lies in how it was used and its relationship to the lives of African Americans in Alexandria.

These structures were important training grounds for future leaders in the black community and the city at large. Many of the founding members of these groups and institutions were also successful businessmen in the Alexandria community. Communal structures provided opportunities for African Americans to create their own social structure in a safe place within a segregated environment. These buildings, owned and operated by African Americans, allowed them to have control over some portion of their lives.

Registration Requirements

In order to qualify for listing, communal structures should be associated with the history of African American communal organizations in Alexandria. They may be affiliated with religious groups that were historically important in the growth and evolution of the African American community. Changes to the buildings over time are important and should be recognized as a reflection of the evolution of the African American community in Alexandria.

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62 Miller, "The Odd Fellows Hall," 3.

Setting and Location
The setting in Alexandria evolved as the city grew. Buildings and structures of this property type should be located within the corporate limits of Alexandria, and may fall inside or outside the established Alexandria National Historic Landmark District and the locally designated Parker-Gray Historic District. The location of a communal building may fall within a residential or commercial area. Its relationship with the historic African American neighborhoods may strengthen its significance.

Design, Materials, and Workmanship
Historically significant properties may include all types of designs, workmanship, and materials. They may also include alterations and additions that could reflect important changes over time. The participation of African American carpenters, craftsmen, brick-makers and layers, and other tradesmen and professionals in the construction of these buildings and structures will contribute to their significance.

Feeling and Association
A structure must be associated with the history and evolution of communal organizations in Alexandria's African Americans communities. It could also provide information that reveals new data and/or contributes to the history of African American communal organizations and their relationship to the community in Alexandria. A communal structure may also be related to a person, or group of persons, significant to the city's African American history.

G. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Corporate limits of Alexandria, Virginia.

H. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

The survey was conducted and directed on a part-time basis, from July 1993 through August 1994 by Elizabeth Clavit. Robert Rivers, an urban planner and historic preservation specialist, served as editor and provided professional advice. Jennifer Jones, a part-time intern, worked on the project from January-March 1994. Marie Fennell, a graduate student at the University of Virginia, Falls Church campus, researched the Seaton house and Roberts Chapel as part of a class project.

Discussions were held with Director Eugene Thompson, Curator Audrey Davis, and Lillian Patterson, museum aide of the Alexandria Black History Resource Center, to determine contexts already identified as important to the local African American community. Context themes and sites related to three main themes were identified. Pamela Cressey of Alexandria Archaeology contributed information on the archaeological history of the city and African American sites. Anna Lynch, a volunteer for Alexandria Archaeology, researched Moses Hepburn and the properties he owned in the city. Discussions were also held with staff of the City of Alexandria's Office of Historic Alexandria, the Library's Local History/Special Collections, and the Department of Planning and Zoning. The Historic Alexandria Foundation, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, and the National Register office of the National Park Service were also consulted.

The survey was conducted and data collected by researching existing books, records, photographs, manuscripts, dissertations, exhibits, and maps held by the Alexandria Black History Research Center, the Alexandria Library's Local History/Special Collections, the Office of Planning Zoning, and Alexandria Archaeology, as well as other related sources.

After surveying the area on foot and photographing neighborhoods that were known African American settlement areas at one time, it was recognized that many streetscapes that illustrate the evolution of African American residents were still intact. However, other neighborhoods showed extensive change. To this day, although there are concentrations of African Americans in some areas of the City, some African Americans live in all neighborhoods of the City. Because of this, it was decided that the best way to depict the history of African Americans in Alexandria was to choose the best historic resources that reflect three themes; residential development, education, and communal. For these themes, seven sites were selected that would span the period of significance (1790-1953) and would best illustrate the contexts. Several other sites could have qualified, but the ones chosen had the most complete compiled history.

The goal of the nomination is to show the evolutionary history of African Americans in Alexandria. The time period 1790 to 1953 was chosen because it encompasses a wide span of African American history and numerous sites associated with the subject. The year 1790 was the first year that a Federal census was taken in Alexandria and is therefore the first year in which the number of African Americans in the city, both free and enslaved, was officially recorded. The year 1953 was chosen to reflect the continued importance of the city's African American heritage throughout the 20th century.

There are four criteria utilized for listing properties in the National Register of Historic Places:

> Criterion A: a property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
>
> Criterion B: a property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
>
> Criterion C: a property that embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction;
>
> Criterion D: a property that has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criterion A and D were used to evaluate sites for this nomination. Many sites in Alexandria could be eligible under Criteria A, B, C, or D. Criterion A allows discussion of the broad patterns of Alexandria's African American history that these properties collectively reflect. Criterion D pertains to the Seaton House where archaeological investigations revealed domestic artifacts from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

This project could and should be continued by adding more sites and additional themes to the existing period as more information comes to light. Additional themes could include commercial activities of African Americans, including businessmen, shop owners, professionals, bakers, coopers, sailors, teachers, and the entire range of economic activities in which African Americans participated. The individual lives and contributions of African American women and men needs to be developed further, especially the teachers of the city who held classes in their homes, or in a structure such as a church or school building. The contributions of these people are very important to Alexandria's African American history.

Other institutions, such as the many churches and communal associations that were formed during the period of significance (1790-1953) need to be examined further. There are many churches, in addition to the ones listed in this nomination, that are important to the history of African

American history in Alexandria.

Individuals such as Hannah Jackson, a washerwoman, part of a job class that was most often at the bottom of the economic ladder contributed to Alexandria's African American history. Ms. Jackson was responsible for freeing and raising Moses Hepburn, a very successful African American businessman.[63] There are probably others with similar stories that could be told and sites associated with them that could be identified. The identification of these sites would lead to a better understanding of the full spectrum of life for African Americans in Alexandria.

There have been extensive archaeological investigations of many significant African American sites in the city, many of which have yielded information concerning the development of African American neighborhoods. All of the information in this nomination on the evolution of these neighborhoods was gathered from the written documentation of these sites.

Suggested topics for further research and future amendments to this nomination that could provide information on the lives of African Americans in Alexandria through the years of initial settlement, prosperity, depression, freedom, and renewed prosperity include:

- Alexandria's African American Archaeological resources
- the African American population in Alexandria prior to 1790
- the communal organizations in the early twentieth century
- the lives, residences, and work places of African American teachers, grocers, washerwomen, and others
- the private houses that served as schools for African Americans
- African American commercial development
- African American churches established before, during, and after the Civil War
- properties associated with Alexandria's African American slave population
- African American cemeteries, including the Silver Leaf Society, and Freedmen's and Douglas Cemeteries
- the Freedmen's Bureau and "Contraband" sites during the Civil War
- the Underground Railroad and locations connected with runaway enslaved peoples seeking freedom.

63 Sara Revis, Historical Case Studies of Alexandria's Archaeological Sites, Hannah Jackson: An African American Woman and Freedom, Archival Data Pertaining to 406-408 South Royal Street number 33 (Alexandria, VA: Alexandria Archaeology, Office of Historic Alexandria, City of Alexandria, 1985).

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